

SCSEP Region IV Conference Call  
Thursday, May 25, 2006

ATTENDEES: *Role was not taken; names of other attendees may have been unintentionally omitted.*

Arizona: Joel Millman, State of Arizona, Dept. of Economic Security  
Hector Acosta, Tucson  
Mai Gabil, Area Agency on Aging, Phoenix  
Kent Koopman, Easter Seals, Yavapai County  
Guadalupe Lendo, Asociacion Nacional Pro Personas Mayores  
Joan Moore, Pinal/gila Council for Senior Citizens  
Arkansas: Nadine Grice, Arkansas Dept of Human Services  
Colorado: Audrey Krebs, State of Colorado, Aging and Adult Services  
Lynn Dyatt, Rocky Mountain SER  
Corrine Sherrick, Senior Resource Center, Denver  
Nina Shain, Seniors, Inc., Trinidad, CO  
Idaho: Melinda Adams, Pacific Northwest Older Worker (NOW) coalition  
Louisiana: Rosemary Davis, Office of Elderly Affairs  
New Mexico: David Borrego, SER New Mexico  
Doug Calderwood, New Mexico Long-Term Services  
North Dakota: Linda Wright, Dept of Human Services  
Julie McKenzie, Job Service North Dakota  
South Dakota: Todd Kolden, South Dakota Department of Labor  
Texas: Luke Stokes, Mission Waco  
Jose Gardino, Laredo  
Gabrielle Black, SER National, Irving  
Raul Santa, SER National, Irving  
Utah: Darren Hotten, State of Utah, Aging and Adult Services  
Edith Fauver, Salt Lake County  
Wyoming: Peggy Auker, Experience Works  
DOL: Chad Trepinski  
Lois Engel

Chad began the meeting at 11am, introducing Melinda Adams who represented the Pacific NW Coalition.

**I. Coalition/Collaborative – Why is it important? – Melinda – 15 minutes**

**PURPOSE OF PACIFIC NW COALITION:**

Melinda thanked everyone for the invitation to report on their Pacific NW Coalition. She feels the coalition is quite purposeful and that it has added much value. Melinda stated that the coalition does not have formal structure. There are 87 individual or common bond holders working with older individuals to include Alaska, Oregon, Idaho and Washington. Organizations included were National Contractors (Experience Works, AARP, ANNPM and USFS), Area Agencies on Aging (state grantees), a variety of Non-profits, as well as Community Colleges. Melinda stated that she felt the strength of the coalition lies with the front line staff. There are project managers like Peggy Auker and Judith Gilbert with DOL who participate regularly. Mary Edgar of DOL Region VI (now retired) also played a significant part in establishing the Pacific NW Coalition.

**BENEFITS OF PACIFIC NW COALITION:**

Melinda stated that the benefits were many. That it was a great opportunity for the Pacific Northwest to:

Network and share information.

Affordable – not as expensive as bringing everyone in to a specific site.

Effective way to dialog with representatives to express concerns.

Very good advocacy vehicle, i.e., for income eligibility, placements, etc.

They had the opportunity to review the new Title V regulations as a group and to convey collective concerns.

Good way to share program ideas.

Provides Individual Professional growth opportunities.

## **HOW IT WORKS:**

They have a conference call every month to share concerns and explore opportunities. There is someone designated to notify everyone of the conference call and establish the agenda. They also have someone to maintain and track a list of attendees and to maintain a mailing list. There is someone designated to take minutes. She stated again that there is no formal structure. They just try to keep things simple. In September they have a 3 ½ day Annual Conference. The first day of the conference is training for new staff called SCSEP 101. The remaining 2 ½ days they present Needs Assessment done by Joyce Welsh. They have found this to be extremely valuable. They are in their sixth year of operation. They have had one or two AD Hoc Committees. One AD Hoc committee was for concerns on eligibility and one was on training. She stated that DOL has been very supportive. Melinda then asked for questions.

**Q:** Audrey Krebs, CO State Aging and Adult Services: *How do they determine what the coalition is going to support, etc.?*

**A:** Melinda: They break into groups and identify key concerns and issues then they vote as a group on the issues they identified and want to support. They ask for volunteers for a lead spokesperson to make the presentation. That person then writes up a letter on behalf of the coalition. If it is on a conference call, they take a voice vote over the phone.

**Q:** Audrey Krebs, CO State Aging and Adult Services: *How many members do you have participating on the conference calls?*

**A:** Melinda stated that they have approximately 25 state and national members attending.

**Q:** Julie of North Dakota asked *How did the group get going?*

**A:** Melinda stated that it was first formed by the State of Washington. Hank Hibbard her counterpart in Washington and Bob Lunds from DOL set up a meeting at the Seattle Airport. They found that the dialog was so effective that they wanted to continue and DOL has been extremely supportive. DOL provided conference call telephone lines, etc. Mary Edwards was most helpful and encouraged others to join and participate. They found that this was so helpful and provided the incentive to continue. It is a great way to build camaraderie between grantees and subgrantees.

**Q:** Joel Millman, AZ *Do people share plans, etc?*

**A:** Melinda stated that is was done mostly informally. That there was quite a bit of sharing, etc. at the annual meeting. That they explored best and worst practices. They often email back and forth.

**Q:** Joel Millman, AZ. *Is it useful?*

**A:** Melinda – Absolutely. It was extremely useful in preparing the state plan.

Audrey spoke on the coalitions role and the Dept. of Labor's role in the conference calls.

A. Clarify Roles – Audrey – 10 minutes

#### 1. Department of Labor's Role

Audrey stated that the role of DOL was to provide the telephone lines for the conference call. It is imperative that we come up with a facilitator and a recorder.

DOL will also send out minutes, etc. They will also notify members of meetings and prepare the agenda.

Darren Hotten State of Utah Aging and Adult services agreed to be the facilitator for 6 months and Lynn Dyatt of Rocky Mountain SER agreed to be the recorder for 6 months.

**Q.** Joel *asked the question about overlapping of people in the regions, etc.*

**A.** Melinda stated that is not a problem.

Joel then offered to help or to back up Darren as facilitator.

It was stated that there were 28 people signed on to the conference call.

## **II. REAUTHORIZATION:**

A. Peggy presented a brief report/update on the reauthorization after the last meeting. She stated the second version of the House Bill has not been heard by the full house yet. It was supposed to have been heard on Wednesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>.

Peggy outlined that there was a dual purpose of the SCSEP program. One was community service and the other was employment. They allowed private and public to compete for the program. That it would not all go to the states. The proportions remained the same and it would retain the age 55 requirement. Grantees would report performance measures. There are challenges in defining costs. Strengths are in business partnerships and supportive service benefits. Sets a limit of two year average participation per grantee. Placement threshold will move from 20-30 percent at a level of 2 percent per year.

There was sub committee discussion on the following concerns:

There needs to be some protection for rural areas;  
There is a need for some of the participants to be allowed minimal employment;

Many of the participants are underemployed;

Income eligibility is causing concern. Recommend returning to 6 mos. vs. 12 mos.

They recommend the contracts be for five years versus three years.

May 17<sup>th</sup> the full house committee also discussed an increase in minimum wage.

There is a recommendation to widen the pool of SCSEP contractors.

Peggy stated there would be some additional items after it was out of committee. They have not seen a Senate Bill. Then it will be reviewed. Both Senate and House bills will move on to Conference Committee. She expects passage prior to August recess. However, other titles of OAA may hold up reauthorization.

**Q.** David Borrego of Santa Fe.

*Do you think they will push the Reauthorization Bill?*

**A.** Peggy:

They are looking for wins. They hope to have the reauthorization passed by fall prior to the end of the session. Peggy said this bill moved fairly quickly. They want some success to the Older Americans Act. In the past, SCSEP has tied it up.

#### **B. Melinda Adams – Frontier Proposal**

Melinda referred to the email attachments regarding the Frontier Bill. The Bill is trying to focus on realistically trying to be fair. Therefore, they are proposing an Amendment to Title V to address the needs by creating a frontier section within Title V.

#### **WHY?**

1. Lot to do with long-term states needs. 75% are to used for wages;
2. Negative impact of eligibility;
3. No distinction of needs for the frontier areas.
4. Time for change

Melinda stated that there are still needs in the frontier areas, but the people not longer qualify for the SCSEP programs. She gave the example that there is a 28% decrease in placements over the previous year and a 46% decrease in enrollments. Hours served have decreased from 52,000 to 28,000 in one year.

**Q.** Audrey *why were the reductions so great?*

**A.** Melinda, exactly. She stated that her staff analyzed some of the reasons:

1. Underemployment;
2. Seasonal employment;
3. Frontier Spirit;
4. In previous years, people would have been eligible with the 25% Soc. Sec. exclusion high on the list;
5. There are big decreases in service levels;
6. Frustrations over cost levels;
7. Lack of public transportation;

Melinda then outlined the Frontier Bill:

1. Allow each Governor to designate specific frontier counties. Each state could amend eligibility requirements. This would be done through the State Plan.
2. The Frontier Bill would allow existing grant funds to be allocated for transportation and front line staff. There is not enough money – it is minimally funded.
3. This would allow National and State grantees to better serve the needs of the participants.
4. Lowers PWFB threshold to 50%
5. Income eligibility guidelines could be adjusted by states

Melinda emphasized this proposal is budget neutral—doesn't take funds away from any state or national grantee. She stressed that the Commission on Aging people contact their congressional representatives. Senator Larry Craig from Idaho will be the lead on this proposal. She requested that everyone to contact their representatives in their regions for support of the Frontier proposal. Melinda stated that there is a National Center for Frontier Communities. This proposal has been adopted by the Western Governor's Association.

Audrey thanked Melinda for her reports and her efforts.

### **III. PY 2006 STATE GRANT APPLICATION:**

Gail referred to the TEGL and State Allotments in the email attachment and presented some key highlights:

1. The TEGL's were sent out by letter last week;
2. State grant applications are due June 12<sup>th</sup>;
3. If grantees fail to meet 80% of their aggregate PY 2005 goals, they must submit a CAP and address this in the technical proposal narrative.

Chad then reviewed the basic content of the TEGL:

1. State plans are due November 1, 2006
2. Technical approach to recruitment and placement, i.e., supportive services, collaboration, transportation, etc.
3. Performance Measures – reporting on SPARQ 2, equitable distribution, areas served,
4. Program Administration, i.e., financial operations and internal controls, file maintenance, and audits.
5. Contingency Plan for participants, i.e., process and timeline, complaint procedures, records or issues.

TEGL will appear on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) on May 30 after SGA is taken down.

**Q.** Joel:

*On the ED piece – it seems grantees are shooting in the dark. Appears this is more of a plan than a proposal.*

**A.** Chad:

DOL acknowledges this is a plan

#### **IV. REPOSITORY OF INFORMATION:**

Joel reported on the fact that there is a need of a repository of information. The thought behind this being that it would be helpful to have a single source of information to find out about other programs and plans, sharing of best practices. He wanted to throw this out to the group for their thoughts. Where would it be housed? Who would host it?

Darren stated he felt it would be helpful with people going and coming that it would be a place to go to get help, compare, etc. Several of the participants agreed. Joel stated that there could be training for new people through a mentorship program. There was discussion on how this would be handled. Chad stated that DOL would be happy to provide links, but they could not house or host the site. The consensus was that this could be most helpful and that it should be pursued and researched further. Joel asked that if there was anyone out there who wanted to assist or provide ideas to let him know. It was determined to keep the Repository item on the next agenda. Someone stated that this might be the first sub committee of this group.

**V. OPEN DISCUSSION:** Audrey asked if anyone had anything further to discuss/comment on.

Audrey reported on a meeting she had attended recently regarding people receiving SSDI. That we could find more participants due to income exclusions related to Impairment Related Work Expenses or IRWE. Everything needs to be documented and go through Social Security, but this may be an avenue for new participants. Discussion ensued regarding documentation from Social Security, etc.

The following topics were recommended for the agenda for the next meeting:

- I. Repository
- II. Mentorship – Doug 5-10 minutes
- III. Transition - Big Changes
- IV. Update of Reauthorization – Peggy Auker

**Q.** Hector Acosta from Tucson, AZ:

*Is there any chance of reinstating the 25% disallowance?*

**A.** Chad:

Not appropriate. No current exclusion. Changes in income eligibility guidelines are under discussion in reauthorization deliberations.

Chad requested that all those participating in the conference call email him with their names, etc., so they would be added to the minutes. It was agree to skip June and that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, July 20, 2006 at the same time.

Peggy Auken reminded everyone that two months is a long time and that things may be happening during that time. She urged people to work with their supervisors and administrators and to watch legislation procedures closely so that they can educate and update everyone in their regions.

The conference call meeting adjourned at 12:30 MT.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Dyatt, State SCSEP Coordinator of Colorado  
Rocky Mountain SER